



JAEGER-LECOULTRE UNVEILS A NEW ART INSTALLATION SPECIALLY COMMISSIONED FROM THE CELEBRATED AMERICAN ARTIST MICHAEL MURPHY

Deepening the relationship between watchmaking and art, Jaeger-LeCoultre has commissioned a new work from the celebrated American artist, Michael Murphy.

The installation, titled *Spacetime*, further expands the cultural and creative universe of the Manufacture by exploring the relationship between the three physical dimensions of space, and the fourth dimension of time. Following its debut in China at Watches & Wonders Shanghai on April 14th, *Spacetime* will be exhibited in key cities around the world over the course of the year.

THE ANAMORPHOSIS

Michael Murphy's main body of work emphasises perspective: his installations require the viewer to change position in order to fully appreciate them. Fusing classical art-making techniques with digital processes and manual skills, he has invented an entirely new formula for rendering two-dimensional images as suspended, three-dimensional mobiles. These anamorphic installations comprise a multitude of objects hanging at various heights and distances. Depending on the viewer's line of sight, they appear to change form: from a seemingly random and chaotic jumble of shapes they coalesce into a highly organised and recognisable image. Thus, the viewer experiences a perceptual shift, breaking down the barrier between the art medium itself and the subjective experience.

"We are delighted to be collaborating with Michael Murphy. His artistic installation requires extreme precision, a value that we share at Jaeger-LeCoultre. Our watchmakers throw their heart and soul into every ingenious sketch, every oscillation of the balance wheel, every escapement wheel - always pushing the boundaries of precision." says Catherine Rénier, Chief Executive Officer of Jaeger-LeCoultre.

For this new work, the Maison has collaborated with an artist whose work is often based on images of instantly recognisable cultural icons. "The Reverso has this iconic graphic identity and that's the type of content that I often work with," says Michael Murphy.



The timepiece chosen to be represented through *Spacetime* is the newly released Reverso Tribute Nonantième, which expresses the time in an entirely different manner on each of its faces. The artist immediately saw a parallel between this new Reverso and his anamorphic works, many of which have two distinct sides, showing two entirely different images when viewed from different positions.

“My Reverso design explodes into an array of parts that tell a story about the watch and how it works,” explains Murphy. “I dissected it into all of its working components and composed them in a way that creates two different photographic illusions, one renders the front of the watch and one the reverse.”

The shape of each of the artwork’s 69 components resembles a familiar part of a watch. However, each is photo-printed with different fragments of movement and dial components. These parts appear exactly as in the watch only when they are lined up perfectly, as the viewer walks around the installation.

PARALLELS WITH WATCHMAKING

Beyond the obvious connection to the Reverso, Murphy’s work has many parallels with watchmaking, especially the need for extreme precision. “We create these artworks that are made of a lot of suspended objects that have to line up with one another in three dimensions and we deal with just one millimetre tolerance,” says the artist. “For us, working on a piece more than 12 feet [3.6m] tall, one millimetre adds a real level of complexity. The precision of watchmaking is something we can really relate to.”

As with the development of a new watch calibre, Murphy’s art requires an intense level of planning. It is a highly complex process involving 75 steps that must be taken in the right sequence, beginning with the mapping of exactly where in the three dimensions each component must be, in order to create an image that the viewer can understand. As in a watch movement, if one tiny element is off, the entire work is off.

“SPACETIME” INSTALLATION

The title of the new work, *Spacetime*, came naturally to an artist who has always been fascinated by the relationship between space and time. In physics, spacetime is any mathematical model that fuses the three dimensions of space and the one dimension of time into a single four-dimensional manifold.

“I’ve always thought of my installations as having four dimensions,” Murphy explains. “I create these artworks that are illusions of flat images that float in three dimensional space [with] the length, the width, and the height. And then the experiencing of the piece happens over time. That’s the fourth dimension of the work.”



The collaboration with Jaeger-LeCoultre has fulfilled a desire, long held by the artist, to make a time piece – in the literal sense. “Time is an essential component to all of my work – the fourth dimension. But I have always been fascinated by the aesthetic of internal watch parts and their precision and have always wanted to make a time piece – a piece that is about time.”

For the viewer, Michael Murphy’s *Spacetime* captures the beauty and precision of time-keeping and time-making in a new and uniquely fascinating way.

ABOUT MICHAEL MURPHY

Michael Murphy (b. 1975) is an American artist best known for his unique style of art-making, which he calls Perceptual Art. He describes his technique, which emphasises the viewer’s perception, as “illusions of images rendered in three dimensional space”. In his early career, Murphy created commissioned works while teaching art in universities, and since 2013, he has devoted his time exclusively to creating art. Among Murphy’s most notable works are *Gun Country* and *The Immigrant* – which invite people to reflect on important social issues – his portraits of Barack Obama, and several works created for Michael Jordan and Nike. The artist lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His portfolio can be viewed online at perceptualart.com.

ABOUT THE REVERSO

In 1931, Jaeger-LeCoultre launched a timepiece that was destined to become a classic of 20th-century design: the Reverso. Created to withstand the rigours of polo matches, its sleek, Art Deco lines and unique reversible case make it one of the most immediately recognisable watches of all time. Through nine decades the Reverso has continually reinvented itself without ever compromising its identity: it has housed more than 50 different calibres, while its blank metal flip side has become a canvas for creative expression, decorated with enamel, engravings or gemstones. Today, 90 years after the Reverso was born, it continues to epitomise the spirit of modernity that inspired its creation.